

ACTION



PICTURE
LIBRARY

No.10 One Shilling



**THRILLS!
THRILLS!**
THE CAR MARATHON
THAT RAN INTO A
PRIVATE WAR!

FRONTIER FURY

MEN OF ACTION...

who displayed cool courage in the heat of battle

PPRIVATE ERIC ANDERSON was a stretcher bearer serving with the Duke of York's Own, taking part in the battle for Wadi Akarit in the Western Desert. During the height of the battle Private Anderson went out into no-man's-land to attend to several wounded men. In the face of fierce enemy fire he ventured out three times



and managed to bring to safety three infantrymen. Then, against the advice of his comrades, Anderson went out for a fourth time. He reached another injured man and began attending to his wounds, but an enemy machine gun opened fire, and Anderson fell mortally wounded. For his outstanding gallantry and self-sacrifice, Private Anderson was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

FRONTIER FURY

WHEN THE TWO YOUNG ROYAL MARINE
COMMANDO OFFICERS SET OUT ON THE
LONDON - TO - SYDNEY MARATHON
RACE, THEY NEVER EXPECTED TO DRIVE
BACK IN TIME TO THE DAYS WHEN
SOLDIERS OF THE RAJ DEFENDED THE
WORLD'S CRAGGIEST, MOST DANGEROUS
BORDER, THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF INDIA.

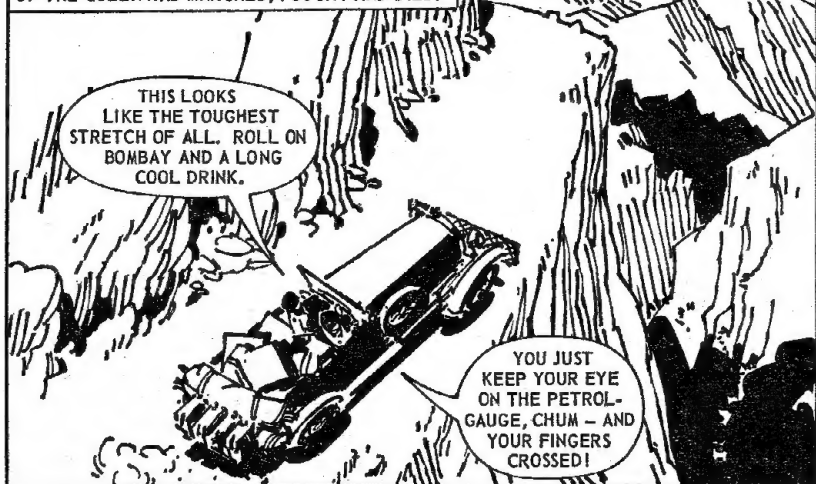
AFGHANISTAN
AT LAST! WE'RE
THE LAST IN THE
RACE, LOFTY - AND
WE'RE RUNNING
SHORT OF PETROL
AGAIN!



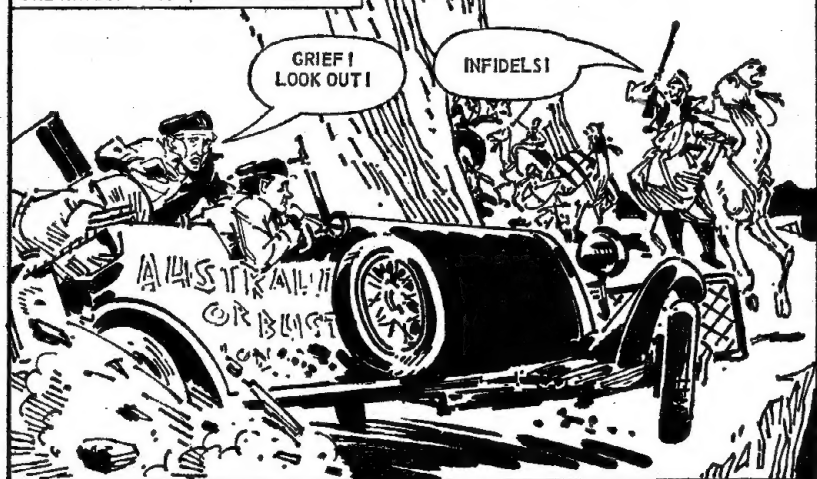
THE VETERAN LAGONDA'S THIRST FOR FUEL WAS A SERIOUS PROBLEM. BUT PETE BURKE AND LOFTY ADAMS MEANT TO GET TO SYDNEY— OR BUST!



THEY WERE SOON ON THE ROAD WHERE, IN ONE CAMPAIGN AFTER ANOTHER, THE SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN HAD MARCHED, FOUGHT AND DIED.



THE CAR ROARED ALONG THE ANCIENT CARAVAN ROUTE THROUGH THE KHYBER PASS — AND SUDDENLY...



THE BEASTS HAVE STAMPEDED! BACK UP, PETE, FOR PITY'S SAKE!



THE OLD LAG SHOT BACK — AND THEN CAME THE CRUNCH!



THEY HAD REACHED THE POINT OF NO RETURN - TO GO ON WAS SAFER THAN TO GO BACK. BUT THE PROSPECTS LOOKED BLEAK.

WE'LL NEVER DO IT, LOFTY. THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE THAN A COUPLE OF GALLONS LEFT IN THE TANK.

LISTEN - WHAT'S THAT NOISE?



IT WAS THE SOUND OF AN AERO ENGINE. THEY LOOKED UP IN SURPRISE - AIRCRAFT WERE VERY RARE ON THE FRONTIER.

A CIVVY JOB. LOOKS AS IF HE'S TAKING A LOOK-SEE AT US.

NO, I RECKON HE'S GOING TO LAND. THERE COULD BE A LANDING-STRIP BEYOND THAT RIDGE.



THE FUEL-GAUGE NEEDLE WAS POINTING TO ZERO.

YOU KNOW, IF
THERE IS AN AIR-
STRIP OVER THAT RIDGE,
THERE COULD BE PETROL
THERE, TOO! EVEN
AVIATION FUEL WOULD
DO AT A PINCH.

YOU
MEAN -
GAMBLE WHAT
WE HAVE TO
FIND MORE? OKAY -
WHAT HAVE WE
TO LOSE -
BUT OUR
NECKS?

THEY FOUND A TRACK HEADING IN THE
RIGHT DIRECTION. IT WAS ROUGH GOING,
THOUGH.

WE MUST
BE CRAZY!
THE OLD GIRL
WILL FALL
TO BITS...

HIGH ABOVE THEM, A FINGER TIGHTENED
ON A TRIGGER...

THE BULLET RICOCHETED OFF A ROCK BEFORE THE CRACK OF THE RIFLE REACHED THE MARINES' STARTLED EARS.



THE FUSILLADE DOUBLED, THEN TRIPLED, INDICATING MORE THAN ONE RIFLEMAN.



PETE BURKE SNORTED.



COME ON,
LET'S SEE THESE
CHARACTERS
OFF. FIGHTING'S
OUR TRADE,
ISN'T IT?

PLAY
IT COOL,
PETE, UNTIL WE
KNOW WHAT'S
WHAT.

BUT PETE WAS ALREADY ON HIS FEET AND DARTING ACROSS THE TRACK.



PETE!
YOU COOT!
YOU'RE ASKING
FOR IT.

A HAIL OF BULLETS FORCED EVEN THE FIERY PETE BURKE TO TAKE COVER AGAIN...



FIVE MINUTES LATER...



THE AFRIDI TRIBESMEN HAD HELD THEIR GROUND AT FIRST, BUT THEN BROKE AND RAN.

THEY'VE
CLOBBERED 'EM!
OH-NICE WORK!
JUST LOOK AT THAT
HORSEMANSHIP!

BUT WHERE
THE BLAZES DID
THEY COME FROM? A
TRAVELLING CIRCUS OR
SOMETHING?

THE RIDER WHO APPEARED TO BE IN COMMAND OF THE TROOP CANTERED BACK AND SALUTED.

DAFFADAR
ABDUL AHMED
REPORTING, SAHIBS.
THE COLONEL-SAHIB SENDS
HIS COMPLIMENTS AND
INVITES YOU TO
FORT VICTORIA.

ER - WELL,
THANKS A LOT,
DAFFADAR. WE'LL
BE GLAD TO COME TO
FORT VICTORIA,
ONLY I THINK OUR
PETROL HAS GIVEN
OUT. THE CAR
WON'T GO.

TO THE DAFFADAR, LACK OF PETROL POSED NO PROBLEMS. WITHIN MINUTES, THE LAGONDA WAS IN TOW!

THE
COLONEL-
SAHIB - WHO
IS HE?

COLONEL
GRESHAM, SAHIB.
HE KNEW YOU WERE IN
TROUBLE AND SENT THE
TROOP WITH THE
INVITATION.

JOLLY
DECENT OF
HIM!

FORT VICTORIA STOOD OUT AGAINST THE SKYLINE LIKE
SOMETHING FROM AN OLD PRINT. SOLID AND FOURSQUARE,
ONCE A BASTION AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF THE CROWN.

WE GO
STRAIGHT
IN, SAHIBS.
THE COLONEL-
SAHIB IS
EXPECTING
YOU.

THIS IS
LIKE SOME-
THING OUT OF THE
SECOND AFGHAN
WAR!



DUSK WAS BEGINNING TO FALL AS THEY EXAMINED THEIR QUARTERS. OIL LAMPS HAD NOT BEEN REPLACED BY ELECTRICITY. A PUNKAH, FANNED BY AN UNSEEN HAND, HAD NOT BEEN SUPERSEDED BY AN ELECTRIC FAN.

AT
LEAST THE
BEDS LOOK FIT
TO SLEEP IN!
DID THEY SAY THEY
WERE BRINGING
OUR KIT
IN?

THE OLD
BOY SAID LEAVE
IT TO THE
BEARER.

THE BEAT OF DRUMS AND THE WAILING OF A BAG-PIPE TOOK THEM HURRYING ON TO THE VERANDAH.

WHAT'S
THE BAND SHOW
FOR?

THEY'RE
BEATING RETREAT,
CHUMP. GOLLY, LOOK
AT THOSE SIKHS
MARCH!

INSIDE, THEY FOUND THE BEARER WAS
ALREADY UNPACKING THEIR KIT.

SAHIB?
I AM FEZIL.
GOOD BEARER. I
PREPARE
YOUR MESS DRESS,
JILDI. VERY
QUICK.


MESS
DRESS? WE
HAVEN'T GOT
ANY!

WE'VE NOTHING
FIT TO WEAR BUT
SPORTS JACKETS AND
FLANNELS!
WONDER WHAT GRESHAM-
SAHIB WILL THINK OF
THIS RIG-OUT!

THE CAVALRY DAFFADAR MADE A POLITE NOISE FROM THE DOORWAY...

THE
COLONEL-
SAHIB WILL NOT
BE PLEASED. HE
LIKES EVERYTHING
DONE MILITARY-FASHION.
YOU SEE, HIS FATHER AND
HIS FATHER'S FATHER
ALSO SERVED MANY
YEARS ON THE
FRONTIER.


CURIOSITY ABOUT THE ODD SET-UP AT THE FRONTIER FORT DROVE THEM TO QUESTION DAFFADAR FURTHER.



I CAN SEE HE'S AN OLD SOLDIER, BUT HE WOULD HAVE BEEN RETIRED WHEN PAKISTAN TOOK OVER THE DEFENCE OF THE FRONTIER. WHAT IS HE DOING HERE NOW?

COLONEL GRESHAM IS RICH MAN, SAHIB. WHEN THE PAKISTANIS WERE GOING TO PULL DOWN THIS FORT, THE COLONEL BOUGHT IT. HE HAS LIVED IN IT EVER SINCE.

MANY OLD NATIVE SOLDIERS CAME TO FORT VICTORIA FOR EMPLOYMENT. HE TREATS THEM LIKE HIS CHILDREN, AND THEY RESPECT HIM AS A FATHER. A GOOD MAN IS COLONEL GRESHAM-SAHIB.



AND THEY CALL US CRAZY!

AW, LET'S STRING ALONG WITH HIM. AFTER ALL, HE CHASED OFF THE TRIBESMEN, GAVE US A BED FOR THE NIGHT AND PROMISED US PETROL. I CAN FORGIVE HIM A LOT FOR THAT!

AS THEY WALKED ACROSS TO THE OFFICERS' MESS, THE DISTANT HOWL OF A MOUNTAIN WOLF MERGED WITH THE NEARER CALL OF A WALL SENTRY.

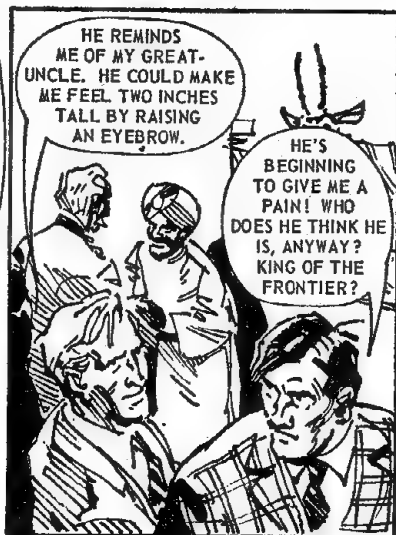
SEVEN
O'CLOCK AND ALL'S
WELL!

EERIE,
ISN'T IT?
GIVES ME
THE WILLIES
A BIT.

THE COLONEL WAS WAITING IN THE ANTE-ROOM OF THE MESS, A SPLENDID FIGURE IN HIS SCARLET MESS JACKET WITH THE MINIATURE MEDALS TELLING OF SERVICE IN TWO WARS AND MANY FRONTIER CAMPAIGNS. HE LOOKED AT THEM WITH A COLD EYE.

GENTLEMEN -
IS THAT THE USUAL
DRESS FOR DINING IN
THE MESS IN THE ROYAL
MARINES?

PETE BURKE BEGAN TO GET RED AT THE BACK OF THE NECK. ANYONE COULD CRITICIZE HIM - BUT THE MARINES WERE UNTOUCHABLE.



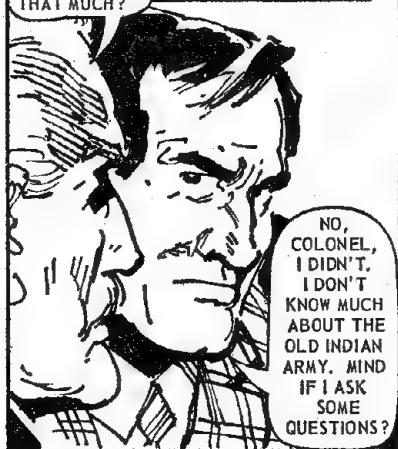
THE DINNER WAS FORMAL. SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE, A REGIMENTAL BAND PLAYED OLD MELODIES, AND THE SERVICE WAS EXCELLENT.



TRY THE CURRY - IT'S A BENGAL SPECIALITY. I'VE BULLIED THE COOK-HAVILDAR UNTIL HE DOES IT RIGHT!

COLONEL, DIDN'T I SEE SOME NATIVE OFFICERS? AREN'T THEY EATING TONIGHT?

THE NATIVE OFFICERS? THEY ARE V.C.O.s ... VICEROY-COMMISSIONED-OFFICERS. THEY HAVE THEIR OWN MESS, SURELY YOU KNOW THAT MUCH?



NO, COLONEL, I DIDN'T. I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE OLD INDIAN ARMY. MIND IF I ASK SOME QUESTIONS?

I MEAN - WHAT IS ALL THIS ABOUT? THIS CHARADE? PLAYING AT SOLDIERS. OH, I ADMIT YOUR CHAPS SAVED US FROM POSSIBLE DEATH -



POSSIBLE DEATH? POPPYCOCK!

GRESHAM'S VOICE WAS HARD, HIS WORDS BRUSQUE...

THOSE AFRIDIS COULD HAVE PUT A BULLET IN YOUR THROAT AT THREE HUNDRED YARDS - FIRST TIME! THEY WERE ONLY FRIGHTENING YOU OFF THEIR TERRITORY. SO DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE AFRIDI TRIBESMEN, SIR.

THEN IT CAME OUT, THE WHOLE FANTASTIC STORY. SO FANTASTIC, THAT IT WAS - UNBELIEVABLE.

THEY WERE GUARDING THE 'SECRET COUNTRY'. THAT'S WHAT I CALL THE KHAN OF RAMJIN'S TERRITORY NOW. THERE'S SOMETHING ODD GOING ON THERE WHICH BODES NO GOOD. THAT IS WHY I PUT FORT VICTORIA INTO A STATE OF DEFENCE AGAIN.

I TRIED TO WARN THE PAKISTAN AUTHORITIES, BUT THEY LAUGHED AT ME. THOUGHT I WAS STILL LIVING IN THE PAST, I SUPPOSE. BUT THEY ARE UP TO NO GOOD IN THE RAMJIN COUNTRY, I TELL YOU. I KNEW THE OLD KHAN WELL - HAD MANY A SCRAP WITH HIM. BUT NOW HIS GRANDSON HAS TAKEN OVER.



A HOT-HEADED YOUNG DEVIL, EDUCATED IN THE MIDDLE-EAST OR SOME OUTLANDISH PLACE. BUT I HAVE MY INFORMERS. THERE'S NOT MUCH GOES ON WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE!



HE ROSE, THE SIX FEET TWO INCHES OF HIM AS STRAIGHT AS A RAMROD. WHEN HE GAVE THE ROYAL TOAST, PETE WONDERED WHICH QUEEN HE WAS PLEDGING - ELIZABETH OR VICTORIA?

GENTLEMEN -
THE QUEEN!



THE QUEEN!

IN THE ANTE-ROOM, GRESHAM
CONTINUED TO TALK.


SO WHEN THE
AUTHORITIES WOULD
DO NOTHING, I BEGAN TO
RECRUIT MEN I KNEW.
MEN FROM THE OLD
REGIMENTS. SKINNER'S HORSE,
RATTRAY'S SIKHS,
PROBYN'S HORSE, THE
CORPS OF GUIDES AND
THE PIFFERS. WE'LL
TAKE CARE
OF IT!

THE
PIFFERS? WHAT'S
THAT?

HE STARED AT PETE IN SURPRISE.

THE PIFFERS,
SIR, WERE THE PUNJAB
FRONTIER FORCE, P.F.F.
FOR SHORT. WHERE DID
YOU GET YOUR MILITARY
EDUCATION?


I CAME
INTO THE ARMY
TO FIGHT, COLONEL - NOT
TO DWELL ON OLD
GLORIES.



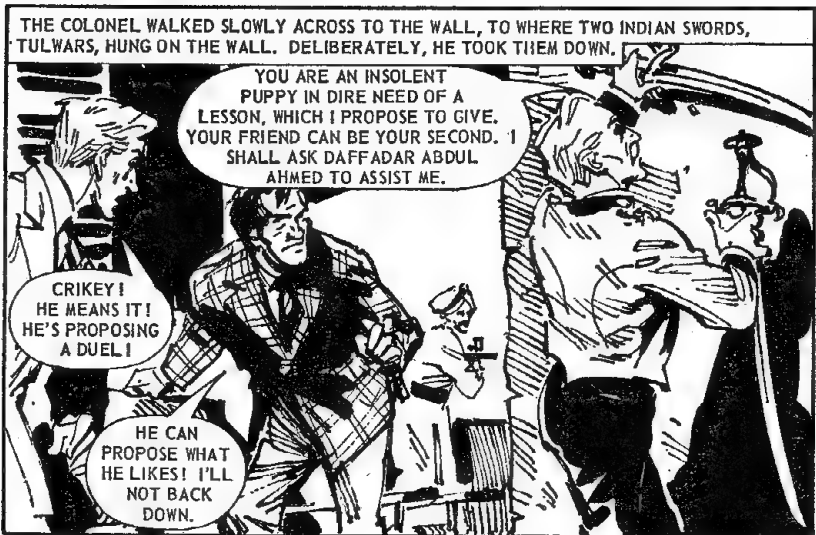
HIS WEARINESS WAS AFFECTING PETE'S JUDGMENT. HE HAD FORGOTTEN HE WAS A GUEST IN THE MESS.

YES, OLD GLORIES, WHICH WON'T LIE DOWN. IT'S MY GUESS YOU'VE THOUGHT UP THIS COCK-AND-BULL STORY OF INTRIGUE IN RAMJIN JUST SO THAT YOU CAN PRETEND TO BE A HERO AGAIN! AN OFFICER OF THE RAJ DEFENDING THE EMPIRE!

A VEIN BEGAN TO THROB ON GRESHAM'S TEMPLE. IT WAS THE ONLY SIGN OF EMOTION. HIS VOICE WAS HARD AND LOW.



MISTER BURKE, YOU FORGET YOUR MANNERS. NO MAN HAS EVER SPOKEN LIKE THAT TO ME IN MY OWN MESS. IF HE HAD DONE - I WOULD HAVE CALLED HIM OUT. HOWEVER - YOU ARE MY GUEST...



THE OPEN SPACE NEAR TO THE GATES WAS DESIGNATED AS THE DUELLING-GROUND. THE FLARING TORCHES GAVE IT LIGHT, THE FLAMES REFLECTING IN THE COLD STEEL.



PETE WAS A STRONG, HEALTHY YOUNG ATHLETE, BUT IT DID NOT SEEM TO WORRY THE ELDERLY COLONEL.

YOU ARE NOT WITHOUT SKILL, BUT YOU LACK POLISH.

POLISH HAS BEEN ABOLISHED IN THE COMMANDOS. WE KILL IN A VERY COMMON WAY NOWADAYS!

YET NO MATTER HOW THE MARINE TRIED TO DISARM THE OLDER MAN, HE ALWAYS FOUND A STEELY DEFENCE.

UGH!

YOU USE TOO MUCH ENERGY. YOU HAVE STILL TO LEARN TO CONSERVE IT.

AFTER OVER FIVE MINUTES OF HARD FENCING, GRESHAM SUDDENLY TOOK THE OFFENSIVE. HIS BLADE FLASHED WICKEDLY, FORCING PETE TO BACK OFF, AGAINST HIS WILL.



TAUNTED AS A COWARD, THE COMMANDO LOST WHAT CAUTION HE HAD. HE SURGED FORWARD - AND FOUND HIMSELF INSTANTLY DISARMED.





BURKE WAS NOT THE BEST LOSER IN THE WORLD, BUT HE KNEW WHEN HE WAS LICKED.

ALL RIGHT, I'LL GIVE YOU BEST, COLONEL. I WAS YOUR GUEST. I SHOULD NOT HAVE ACTED LIKE A CLOD.

I SUGGEST YOU RETURN TO YOUR QUARTERS, LIEUTENANT.



IT IS CRAG PIQUET DAY TOMORROW, AN ANNIVERSARY OF A LONG-AGO VICTORY WHICH WE CELEBRATE WITH A FULL DRESS PARADE. YOU NEED NOT STAY TO SEE IT. PLEASE BE ON YOUR WAY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

WE'LL DO JUST THAT, COLONEL!

THEY SLEPT HEAVILY AND LATE. WHEN THEY HAD PACKED AND FILLED THE LAGONDA TANK, THE PARADE WAS ON. IN THE FULL DRESS OF PROBYN'S HORSE, GRESHAM LOOKED MAGNIFICENT.

WEE-OW!
YOU MAY HATE
HIS GUTS, BUT YOU'VE
GOT TO ADMIT
HE LOOKS THE PART -
AN OFFICER OF
THE RAJ!



BUT PETE BURKE DID NOT EVEN BOTHER TO LOOK BACK...



IT'S LIKE
SOMETHING OUT
OF A BOOK. I
WOULDN'T HAVE
BELIEVED IT TO
BE TRUE.

THAT'S
JUST IT - IT
ISN'T TRUE! IT'S
ALL MAKE-BELIEF!
GRESHAM AND HIS TYPE
ARE DEAD - BUT
THEY WON'T LIE
DOWN!

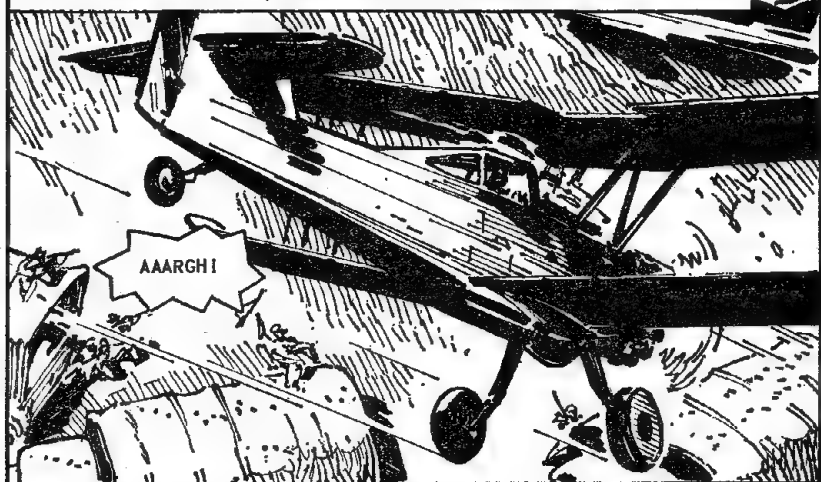
THERE WAS NO MAKE-BELIEF ABOUT THE RIFLE FIRE COMING FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE TRUNK ROAD WINDING THROUGH THE PASS.



LOFTY REMEMBERED GRESHAM'S WORDS.



IT WAS THE SAME LIGHT PLANE THEY HAD SEEN THE PREVIOUS DAY. BUT NOW IT WAS FITTED WITH A MACHINE GUN, WITH PROPELLER-INTERRUPTER GEAR.



AS THE PLANE SOARED UP AGAIN, ANOTHER ENGINE-SOUND BECAME AUDIBLE. IT WAS A FAMILIAR SOUND TO THE YOUNG MARINES.



PETE SWALLOWED HIS PRIDE. THIS WAS MORE THAN A PATHAN TRIBESMAN'S HOLD-UP.

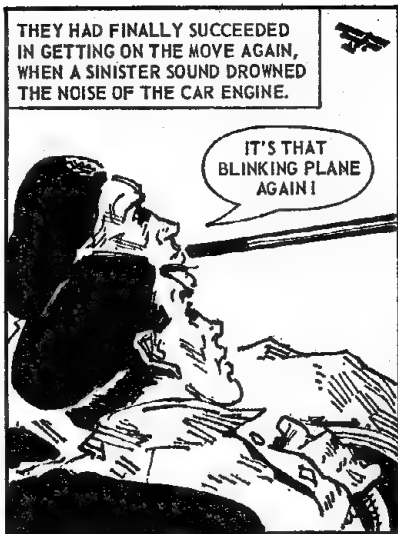
LET'S GET BACK AND TELL GRESHAM. HE COULD HAVE BEEN RIGHT ABOUT ODD THINGS GOING ON IN RAMJIN.

OKAY. BUT GO EASY ON THE ABOUT TURN.

PETE HAD NEARLY COMPLETED THE TURN ON THE LAST REVERSE, WHEN THE DEEP-TREAD TYRES WENT OVER THE EDGE.

DARN IT! NOW I'LL HAVE TO GET OUT AND PUSH!

HURRY UP, LOFTY - WE'VE BEEN SPOTTED. THERE'S A HORDE OF TRIBESMEN HEADING THIS WAY!



THE MOMENT THE PLANE HAD PASSED, THEY JUMPED BACK IN THE CAR. BUT NOW THERE WERE MORE HAZARDS.

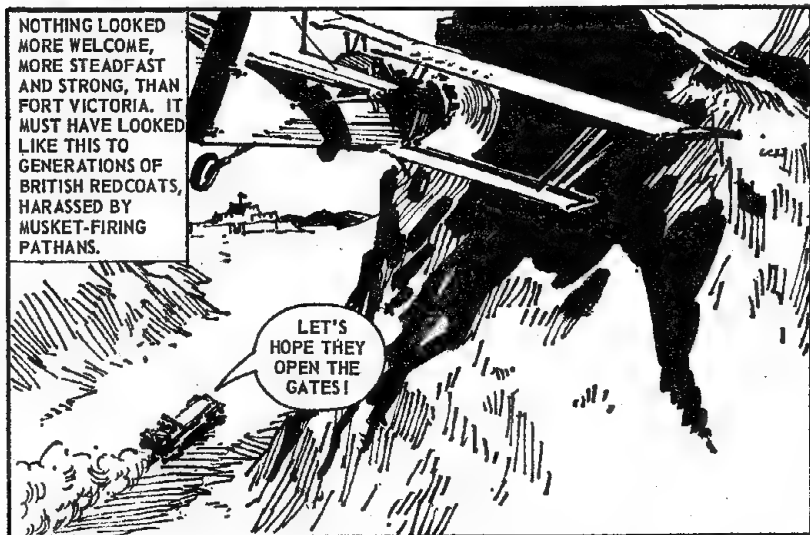
THAT SALADIN IS BELTING UP THIS WAY - PLUS EVERY TRIBESMAN ON THE FRONTIER. THEY'RE AFTER OUR BLOOD ALL RIGHT!

WELL, THEY AREN'T GOING TO GET IT.



NOTHING LOOKED MORE WELCOME, MORE STEADFAST AND STRONG, THAN FORT VICTORIA. IT MUST HAVE LOOKED LIKE THIS TO GENERATIONS OF BRITISH REDCOATS, HARASSED BY MUSKET-FIRING PATHANS.

LET'S HOPE THEY OPEN THE GATES!



THERE WAS NO SHELTER NOW. PETE PUT HIS FOOT HARD
DOWN ON THE ACCELERATOR...

HERE HE
COMES.

HOLD
TIGHT, I'M
GOING TO
JINK!

IT WAS A CAT AND MOUSE GAME, BUT
THE MOUSE WAS HARD TO CATCH!

MISSED
US! WE'LL
MAKE THE
FORT!

PETE SCREAMED TO A HALT INSIDE THE OPEN GATES. THE PARADE HAD BROKEN UP AND GRESHAM'S VOICE RAPPED OUT.



PETE DID THE BEST HE COULD TO SWALLOW HIS PRIDE, TO ADMIT HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN WRONG.



THE PLANE MADE ONE MORE PASS TOWARDS THE FORT, BUT A LEWIS GUN ON AN A.A. MOUNTING HAMMERED A FORBIDDING CHALLENGE.



A LEWIS GUN! FIRST WORLD WAR WEAPON, ISN'T IT?

THEY USED 'EM IN THE LAST WAR, TOO. NOT BAD GUNS.

COLONEL GRESHAM TOOK UP HIS POSITION ON THE WALL. HIS EYES NARROWED IN THE SUN.



HERE COME THE 'RAMJIN TRIBESMEN. THEY'LL GET A HOT RECEPTION FROM MY CHAPS - AND THE GATLING GUN!

A GATLING GUN! THE COMMANDOS THOUGHT THERE WERE NO SURPRISES LEFT. GATLINGS HAD GONE OUT BEFORE THE BOER WAR.



AS THE RANGE NARROWED, THE TRIBESMEN BEGAN TO FIRE. GRESHAM WAITED. THEN HIS ORDERS RANG OUT.



THE GATLING CREW'S NO. 1 BEGAN TO CRANK THE HANDLE AND THE OLD-FASHIONED MACHINE GUN POURED OUT ITS LETHAL BULLETS.



THE AFRIDIS STOPPED IN THEIR TRACKS AT THE FIERCE FLURRY OF FIRE FROM THE FORT WALLS.

AAARGH!



BUT THE REAL DANGER WAS YET TO COME...

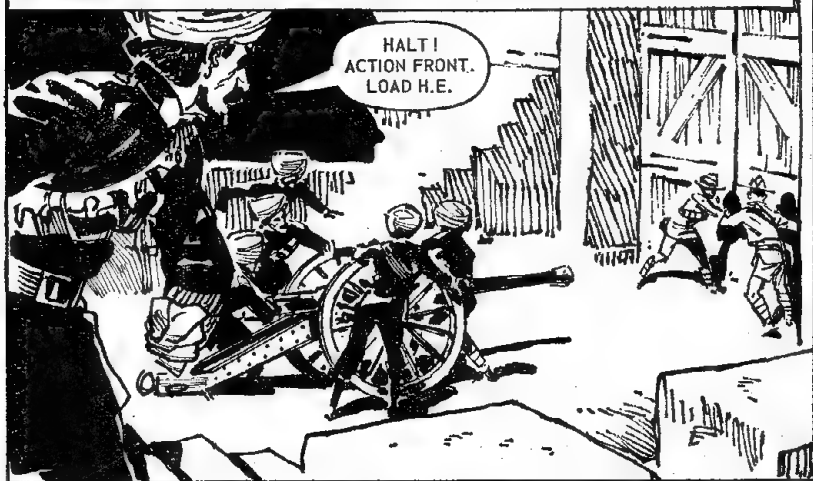
IT'S THE
SALADIN
ARMOURED-CAR,
COLONEL!
HE'LL
TAKE SOME
STOPPING!



SUBAHDAR
FEZIL! BRING
UP ONE SCREW-GUN
TO COVER THE
ENTRANCE. POINT
BLANK FIRE WHEN
I GIVE THE ORDER
TO OPEN THE
GATES.

SAHIB!

THE SCREW-GUN - ONE OF THE FAMOUS LIGHT GUNS OF THE INDIAN MOUNTAIN ARTILLERY, SO CALLED BECAUSE THE BARREL SCREWED OUT FOR EASY CARRIAGE ON A MULE.



THE SALADIN WAS THUNDERING FORWARD, INTENT ON SMASHING STRAIGHT THROUGH THE GATES AND RUNNING AMOK INSIDE THE FORT.



THE LIGHT GUN CRACKED, THE SHELL HITTING POINT BLANK. THE SALADIN CREW HAD THE SHOCK OF THEIR LIVES.

AARGH!
THEY HAVE A
GUN! BACK, MY
BROTHERS!



CAUTION OVERCOMING VALOUR, THE SALADIN BEAT A HASTY RETREAT.

WE CAN
CLOSE THE
GATES. WE'LL
HAVE NO MORE
TROUBLE FROM
THAT
CONTRAPTION.
THE CREW
INSIDE MUST BE
A COWARDLY
BUNCH.





THE COMMANDO BIT BACK THE HASTY AND EXPLOSIVE REPLY TO THAT, WITH DIFFICULTY.




THAT NIGHT, THEY HAD
THEIR MEAL ON THE
VERANDAH OF THEIR
QUARTER. GRESHAM HAD
PREFERRED IT THAT WAY.



HELLO,
THERE'S THE
DICKENS OF A
LOT OF ACTIVITY.
GRAB THE DAFFADAR
AND FIND OUT WHAT
GOES ON,
PETE.

AT THAT MOMENT, THE DAFFADAR
HURRIED BY...



DAFFADAR!
WHAT GOES ON?
WHY ARE THE MEN
MOUNTED?

COLONEL
GRESHAM IS
GOING TO THE
TERRITORY OF
THE KHAN OF
RAMJIN. MORE
THAN THAT I DO
NOT KNOW. I
MUST GO NOW,
SAHIB.

THEY SAW THE
COLONEL MOUNT UP.

THERE
HE GOES!
THEY'D CALL
IT A PATROL
INTO TRIBAL
TERRITORY,
I SUPPOSE—
EXCEPT THIS
TRIBE HAS
SALADINS
AND AN ARMED
AEROPLANE!

I DON'T THINK
THAT'LL WORRY
COLONEL GRESHAM,
SOMEHOW!

WITHOUT A WORD TO THE TWO
COMMANDOS, LANCE GRESHAM
CANTERED OUT INTO THE NIGHT.

LOCK THE
GATES AND
KEEP A KEEN
LOOK-OUT.

SAHIB!

THE HOURS DRAGGED, BUT NEITHER OF THE MARINES FELT LIKE GOING TO BED.



THE SENTRY'S CRY SENT THEM DOUBLING UP THE LADDER TO THE TOP OF THE WALL, WITH DAFFADAR ABDUL AHMED.





THERE WAS GABBLE OF PUSHTU,
THE PATHAN DIALECT. THEN...

HE SAYS THE
COLONEL-SAHIB REACHED
RAMJIN TERRITORY. THEN CAME
A TERRIBLE BATTLE. HE THINKS
THE COLONEL-SAHIB HAS BEEN
TAKEN CAPTIVE BY THE
KHAN OF RAMJIN.

THE DEVIL
HE HAS!



WHAT DID HE SAY?
'NEVER TANGLE WITH A GRESHAM.
THEY NEVER LOSE THEIR
BATTLES'! HE'S LOST THIS
ONE, ALL RIGHT!

SHUT UP -
I'M THINKING.



LOOK,
LOFTY. IT'S
OUR TURN NOW.
I'M FED UP WITH
ALWAYS BEING
BEHOLDEN TO HIM.
WHY DON'T WE MAKE
HIM BEHOLDEN
TO US?

YOU MEAN
DO A RESCUE
ACT? OKAY - IT'S
NO CRAZIER THAN
THIS WHOLE
SET-UP!

THERE WAS NO DIFFICULTY IN RECRUITING A FORCE. EVERY MAN, GURKHA, SIKH, PUNJABI MUSALMAN AND PATHAN, WAS READY TO GO FOR THE SAKE OF GRESHAM-SAHIB.

YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT HE'S A KING-PIN AROUND HERE. THEY REALLY WOULD LAY THEIR LIVES DOWN FOR HIM.

QUIT CHATTERING, LOFTY, AND GET THAT LEWIS GUN FIXED. WE MAY NEED IT.

THE GATES SWUNG OPEN AND PETE PUT THE LAGONDA INTO SECOND GEAR.

DAFFADAR! YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO BE GUIDE. YOU KNOW THIS RAMJIN COUNTRY?

AS I KNOW MY PALM, SAHIB! I WAS BORN THERE!



THE GUIDES OFFICER, WORKING IN HIS OWN BACKYARD, LED THEM BY A LITTLE-KNOWN ROUTE, OFTEN TO THE EMBARRASSMENT OF THE LAGONDA.

I AM
SORRY, SAHIB.
THIS WAY IS GOOD
FOR A HORSE
OR A CAMEL,
BUT -

I KNOW!
IT'S NOT
EXACTLY THE
M-ONE!
NEVER MIND,
WE'LL MAKE
IT!

THE PALACE OF THE KHAN OF RAMJIN LOOKED MORE LIKE A FORTRESS.



THERE IS
THE RAMJIN
VILLAGE AND THE
KHAN'S PALACE,
SAHIB. ALL
SEEMS QUIET.
I DO NOT THINK
THEY EXPECT A
SECOND ATTACK
TONIGHT.

THEY'RE
GOING TO GET
ONE! LET ME SPEAK
TO THE ARTILLERY
HAVILDAR.

WE'RE GOING STRAIGHT IN, HAVILDAR. KEEP YOUR GUNS BACK HERE. IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, OPEN UP ON THE KHAN'S PALACE ABOUT DAWN, UNLESS YOU GET OTHER ORDERS.

OKAY, LOFTY? WE'LL BASH IN AND TRY TO SURPRISE THEM, EH? NO TIME FOR FINESSE!

NEVER KNEW A COMMANDO YET WHO EVEN UNDERSTOOD WHAT THE WORD MEANT! LET'S GO!

AT DAWN, SAHIB!



THEY WENT IN LIKE A CRUSADING ARMY, THE WILD YELLS OF THE GURKHAS ALMOST DROWNING THE NOISE OF THE OLD LAG'S EXHAUST.



AYA GURKHALI

THERE WAS NO LACK OF OPPOSITION. THE TRIBESMEN FLOODED OUT, TO MEET LEWIS GUN BULLETS, RIFLE-FIRE AND THE FLASHING BLADES OF THE KUKRIS.



THE LAGONDA ROARED TOWARDS THE PALACE GATES – AND THEN THE SALADIN ARMoured CAR SLID AROUND A CORNER SLAP INTO ITS PATH.



THERE WAS NO ESCAPE - ONLY SURRENDER! THE TWO COMMANDOS WERE ROUGHLY HUSTLED INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE KHAN OF RAMJIN.



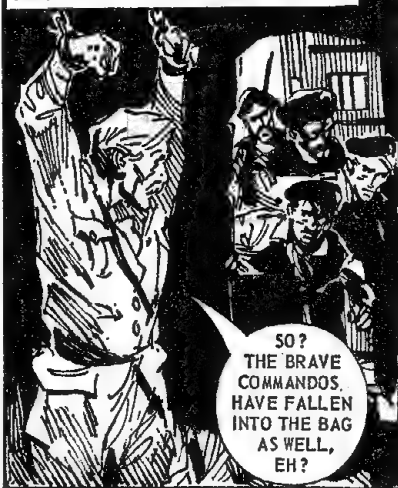
STUPID ENGLISHMEN!
IT IS A PITY YOU DID NOT
DRIVE ON TO AUSTRALIA, FOR
NOW YOU HAVE SEEN TOO
MUCH - AND MUST DIE!



WHERE'S
COLONEL GRESHAM,
YOU RAT?

HAVE NO
FEAR, YOU
ARE ABOUT TO
JOIN HIM,
ENGLISHMAN!
TAKE THEM
AWAY!

THE PALACE CELLS WERE AS DARK AND
SINISTER AS ANY MEDIAEVAL DUNGEON.



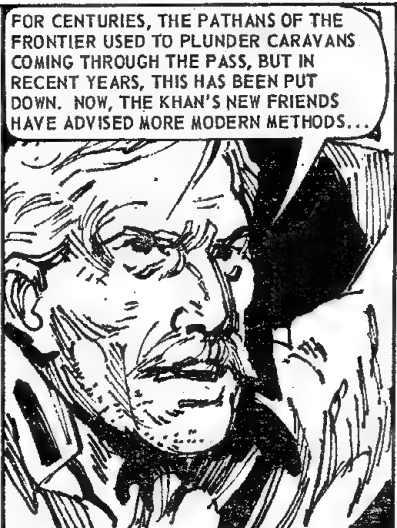
SO?
THE BRAVE
COMMANDOS.
HAVE FALLEN
INTO THE BAG
AS WELL,
EH?

AS THE NIGHT DRAGGED ON, GRESHAM TOLD THEM WHAT HE HAD FOUND OUT.




THE FOOLISH
KHAN MADE ODD
FRIENDS IN THE
MIDDLE-EAST. IT IS
THOSE FRIENDS
WHO HAVE SUPPLIED
THE SALADIN AND
THE AEROPLANE —
AND THE IDEA!

WHAT IDEA?



FOR CENTURIES, THE PATHANS OF THE
FRONTIER USED TO PLUNDER CARAVANS
COMING THROUGH THE PASS, BUT IN
RECENT YEARS, THIS HAS BEEN PUT
DOWN. NOW, THE KHAN'S NEW FRIENDS
HAVE ADVISED MORE MODERN METHODS...



A PROTECTION RACKET! THEY EXTRACT
TOLL IN PESHAWAR AND KABUL FOR A
TROUBLE-FREE PASSAGE — AND THE STUPID
TRAVELLERS ARE BEGINNING TO PAY UP.
THE PLANE IS USED TO SPOT CARAVANS
APPROACHING AND TO ATTACK THEM, IF
THEY DON'T CO-OPERATE. THE SCHEME
WORKS VERY WELL!

NO WONDER
THEY ARE GOING
TO ELIMINATE
US!

THE NIGHT PASSED. CAME THE DAWN...



THE FALL OF SHOT HAD DEMOLISHED THE WALL OF THEIR PRISON AND PETE WAS ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF AN ADVANCING SENTRY WITH THE BROKEN CHAIN ON HIS WRIST.



THE GUNS SUDDENLY CEASED FIRING – AND THE
DAFFADAR AND HIS MEN CAME THUNDERING IN AGAIN.

CHARGE!

GURKHAL!
GURKHAL!!

THERE'S THE
OLD LAG, LOFTY –
LET'S GET TO THAT
LEWIS GUN!

MEANWHILE, COLONEL GRESHAM HAD
CAUGHT A RIDERLESS HORSE AND WAS
GALLOPING TOWARDS THE BATTLE...

GIVE ME
YOUR LANCE,
DOST AMIL! THEY
TOOK AWAY MY
SWORD!

THE ENEMY WERE GIVING GROUND BEFORE THE FURY OF THE COLONEL AND HIS DISCIPLINED FORCE - AND THE KHAN'S TWO "ADVISERS" HASTILY SOUGHT SAFETY IN FLIGHT.



BUT EVEN AS THE LAGONDA ACCELERATED TOWARDS THE FLYING FIELD, THE SALADIN APPEARED, ITS MACHINE GUN BELCHING FLAME.



PETE THREW THE OLD LAG ABOUT ON A ZIG-ZAG COURSE, BUT KEPT HEADING ALL THE TIME FOR THE AIRSTRIP.

DARN IT!
MY BULLETS ARE
BOUNCING OFF
THE SALADIN AS
IF THEY WERE
PEAS!

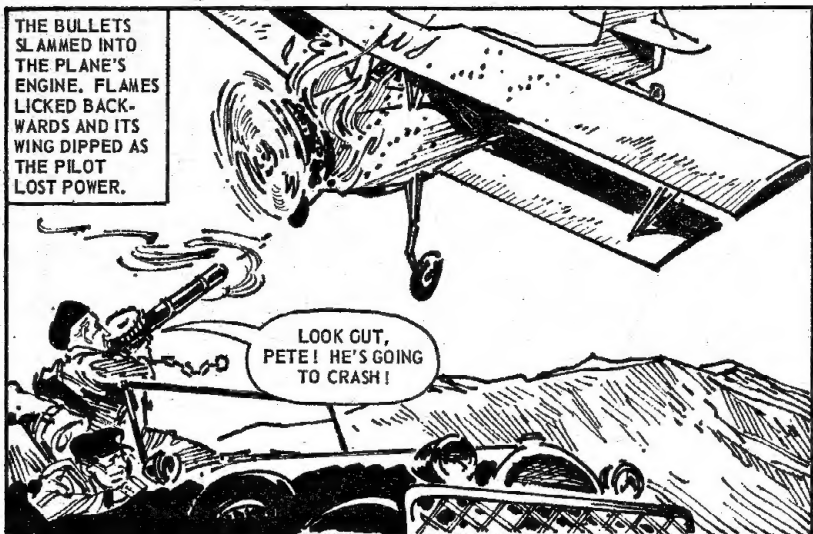
THE
PERISHING
PLANE'S STARTED
TO TAXI!

THE PILOT YANKED HARD BACK ON THE JOYSTICK
AND THE BIPLANE BECAME AIRBORNE.

RIGHTO,
OLD BOY!

FORGET
THE SALADIN,
LOFTY! HAVE
A GO AT THE
PLANE!

THE BULLETS
SLAMMED INTO
THE PLANE'S
ENGINE. FLAMES
LICKED BACK-
WARDS AND ITS
WING DIPPED AS
THE PILOT
LOST POWER.



IT IS DOUBTFUL IF THE SALADIN DRIVER EVEN SAW THE DANGER THROUGH THE RESTRICTED EYEPiece. IN ANY CASE, HE HAD NO TIME TO AVOID THE FALLING FIRE-BOMB.



THE BATTLE OF RAMJIN WAS OVER.

THE KHAN WILL NOW HAVE TO
ANSWER TO THE PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES.
AS FOR YOU YOUNG FELLERS, I ADMIT I MISJUDGED
YOU. NOW, IF YOU'D LIKE TO STAY, I COULD
PROMISE YOU THREE PIPS -

NO, THANKS, COLONEL.
WE'VE GOT A DATE IN SYDNEY.
BUT SOME DAY, SOMEHOW, WE'D LIKE
TO COME BACK - WITH OUR MESS
JACKETS NEXT TIME!

IT WAS STILL "AUSTRALIA OR
BUST!" FOR PETE AND LOFTY,
BUT WHATEVER ELSE HAPPENED
ON THE ROAD TO AUSTRALIA IT
WOULD NOT BE HALF AS EXCITING
OR DANGEROUS AS THEIR
DRIVE THROUGH THE KHYBER PASS.



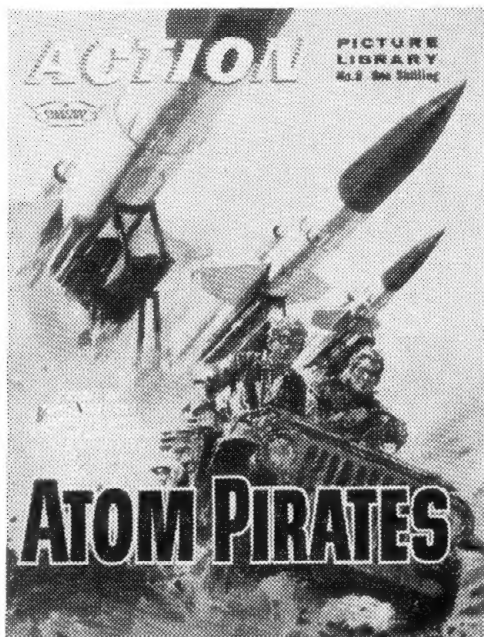
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Tough...Dramatic...

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ATOM PIRATES

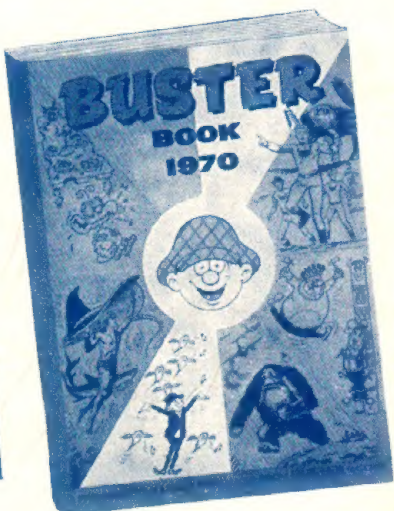
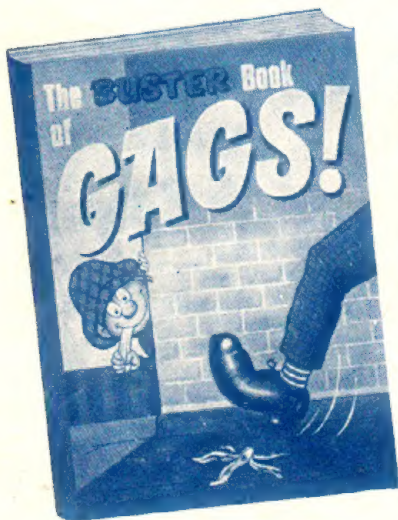
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